

people, and the Chinese Government has retaliated now, as they have in the past, by harassing her children who live in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region by placing them under house arrest, by incarcerating them and by beating them.

Today, Mr. Speaker, the House of Representatives, both Republicans and Democrats alike, ask that Beijing end this campaign of retaliation against the Kadeer family. We join the voice of those who care for those kids, an anguished mother who cries, "let my children go."

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We also ask that Beijing immediately release Hussein Celil, an ethnic Uyghur who is a citizen of Canada, so he can rejoin his family living in that country.

Finally, in the darkness of the political oppression of the Uyghur people, Rebiya Kadeer stands out as a beacon of light and hope. Let us honor her and her family and her work by enthusiastically supporting this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVEGA. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend and thank my good friend from New Jersey. I call him the champion of human rights all over the world. Wherever there is violation of human rights, he is there; and I commend him for his efforts all these years that I have been privileged to work closely with him on these issues.

Mr. Speaker, I recall years ago Mr. Mandela was accused by a former Prime Minister of Great Britain as being a terrorist. Of course, having served in prison for 29 years, all he was trying to say was that something was wrong in South Africa. They call it apartheid. If that isn't a human rights violation, I don't know what is.

But the fact that these two people, the lady and her children and this Canadian citizen, whether it is 2 or 3 or 3 million, our government and this Congress should give every attention as far as to the needs of those people as far as human rights violations are concerned.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 497, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of the People's Republic of China should immediately release from custody the children of Rebiya Kadeer and Canadian citizen Huseyin Celil and should refrain from further engaging in acts of cultural, linguistic, and religious suppression directed against the Uyghur people, and for other purposes. I want to congratulate my good friend and colleague, the distinguished ranking member of this Committee, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for this important human rights resolution. It is the responsibility of the Congress to remind the government of the People's Republic of China of their obligations to live up to international standards to protect ethnic cultural identities and minority rights.

Mr. Speaker, not only does the People's Republic of China systemically abuse the basic human rights of its minority citizens, but its repressive tactics extend to the members of po-

litically active human rights advocates' families. Furthermore, the government has manipulated the international war on terrorism to justify its repressive treatment of the Muslim population living in Xinjiang, as well as encouraging Chinese migration into the region in an attempt to purify the region of its traditional Uyghur occupants.

It is extremely important that the United States hold the government of the People's Republic of China responsible to international standards regarding political as well as basic human rights. The government brutally suppresses even the slightest attempts of peaceful political, religious, and cultural expression of Uyghurs in Xinjiang. As a member of Congress, I feel particularly responsible to Uyghur human rights activist Rebiya Kadeer, who was arrested while she was on her way to meet representatives of our Congressional Research Service. While she was released from prison following international lobbying efforts, deemed a prisoner of consciousness by Amnesty International, upon resumption of her human rights advocacy abroad, her sons in Xinjiang were arrested and remain imprisoned to this day.

This resolution also raises the human rights issues of Huseyin Cecil, a Uyghur Canadian who was recently convicted in a kangaroo court to life imprisonment on "bogus" charges. The Canadian government and Embassy Officials have been refused access to their citizen throughout the process, and the Chinese government has blatantly refused to accept even the most basic norms of diplomatic conduct.

By supporting this resolution, the United States will alert the Chinese government that it must respect the minority rights of the Uyghur people as well as the rights of human rights advocates. The resolution requires the immediate release of the children of Rebiya Kadeer as well as Mr. Cecil so that they might all return to their families.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important resolution.

Mr. FALEOMAVEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 497.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF MALAYSIA'S INDEPENDENCE

Mr. FALEOMAVEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 518) recognizing the 50th anniversary of Malaysia's independence, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 518

Whereas Malaysia is a multi-religious and multi-racial democracy in Southeast Asia that is important to the United States' strategic interests;

Whereas Malaysia is one of the United States' key allies in efforts to combat international terrorism, and it condemns all terrorism, regardless of its cause or objectives;

Whereas the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, has condemned those seeking to incite race and religious hatred, including anti-Semitism;

Whereas Malaysia has taken a leading regional role in counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics in Southeast Asia, through intelligence sharing, close cooperation in law enforcement, participation in joint exercises and training, and other cooperative efforts with its neighboring countries and the United States;

Whereas Malaysia is the United States' 10th largest trading partner, and the two countries have signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement;

Whereas Malaysia has consistently been a favored destination of American investment due to its competitive advantages, including good infrastructure, a highly-trained, educated, and multilingual workforce, and a business-friendly government;

Whereas the Malaysian Constitution guarantees gender equality, and the many accomplishments of Malaysian women evidence Malaysia's commitment to the advancement of women's social, economic, and legal status;

Whereas Malaysia was ruled by the United Kingdom until 1957;

Whereas Malaysia gained independence from the United Kingdom on August 31, 1957; and

Whereas August 31, 2007, is the 50th anniversary of Malaysia's independence, as well as the United States-Malaysia relationship: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the 50th anniversary of Malaysia's independence;

(2) expresses congratulations to Malaysia on reaching this national milestone; and

(3) expresses its support for an ongoing strong bilateral relationship between the United States and Malaysia and the continued cooperation of the two countries in such important areas as counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics, and trade.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVEGA) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FALEOMAVEGA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from American Samoa?

There was no objection.

Mr. FALEOMAVEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and thank the leadership of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and the senior ranking member, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for their support in bringing this legislation before the floor.

Let me also express my support and commendation to my good friend and senior member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) for introducing this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, Malaysia today is a far cry from its humble beginnings a half-century ago. From its start in 1957 as an underdeveloped nation struggling to gain its footing in uncertain terrain of post-colonial Southeast Asia, Malaysia has transformed itself into a confident country that attracts the attention of the world.

Malaysia now boasts a booming economy that is deeply integrated into the world's economic system. Its economy was mature enough to weather the Southeast Asian economic crisis of the late 1990s and rebound to produce strong growth again in the 21st century.

Mr. Speaker, few sights symbolize Malaysia's progress more aptly than Kuala Lumpur's dramatic modern skyline, dominated by the Petronas Twin Towers, which are currently the second-largest buildings in the world and a constant reminder of Malaysia's bright future.

Significant political transformations have accompanied Malaysia's dramatic economic development. But Malaysia's democracy remains incomplete, as evidenced by the fact that the same political party has held power for over 50 years.

The Internal Security Act is used to lock up people without charge, and defamation laws are used to silence critics of the government.

While Malaysia's democratic transition is not fully complete, it remains a democracy nonetheless, and a strong ally of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the United States today counts Malaysia as one of its most important partners in Southeast Asia. Malaysia works closely with the United States to combat terrorism and narcotics trafficking. We look forward to continuing to work with the people of Malaysia to bring peace, stability, and prosperity to this important region of the world.

With this resolution, we support Malaysia's golden anniversary, its 50th year of independence. It is a proud achievement for an important friend and ally of the United States, and I ask and urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 518, recognizing the 50th anniversary of Malaysian independence.

In this regard, I would like to recognize Representative MEEKS and Mr. SESSIONS for their longstanding interest in Malaysia and in expanding economic, political, and people-to-people ties with that important Southeast Asian country.

This year, Malaysia celebrates the 50th anniversary of its independence from Britain as well as the 50th anniversary of U.S.-Malaysia diplomatic relations. Malaysia has earned the reputation of being a moderate majority-Muslim democratic state and has integrated itself into the world economy while maintaining a multi-faith, multi-ethnic society. While recognizing Malaysia's achievements and regional, as well as global, influence, however, it is important to note several areas of concern both for Malaysia's people and the international community.

Malaysia has an established record of tolerance and respect among its varied religious and ethnic populations. However, recent reports raise troubling concerns as to whether the rights of religious and racial minorities are being threatened. For example, the May 30, 2007, decision by the Malaysian Federal Court in the apostasy case of Lina Joy has troubling implications for the question as to whether shari'a law takes precedence over civil law in matters of religious conversion. There are indications that this and other court rulings are eroding the constitutional rights of minorities, which in turn is aggravating a growing socio-religious divide in the country.

The resolution we are considering references the Prime Minister's condemnation of those seeking to incite racial and religious hatred. While commendable, the fact that the Prime Minister perceived it necessary to make this commendation only reinforces the growing perception that the government needs to be more vigilant to ensure that the rights of minorities in Malaysia are respected.

Another area of deep concern to me is in the area of human trafficking. Malaysia has progressively fallen in the tier rankings made by the State Department pursuant to the Trafficking Victims Protection Act until it reached tier 3 in 2007, and that is for the most egregious violators. According to the June 2007 Trafficking in Persons Report, Malaysia is failing to punish acts of trafficking, provide adequate shelters and social services to victims, protect its migrant workers from involuntary servitude, and prosecute traffickers who are arrested and detained under preventive laws. It is particularly disturbing that the Government of Malaysia recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the Government of Indonesia that authorizes Malaysian employers to confiscate and hold the passport of Indonesian domestic employees throughout the term of their employment. Such authority could easily facilitate the involuntary servitude of domestic workers.

I would strongly encourage the Malaysian Government to take the opportunity on this 50th anniversary celebration of the country's independence to seriously address human trafficking so as to protect the rights of all individuals residing or transiting within its borders.

The United States and Malaysia have sometimes had sharp policy differences. Yet despite these occasional disagreements, this resolution points out that the U.S. and Malaysia have continued to work closely together in such important areas as counterterrorism, defense cooperation, counter-narcotics, and trade. Bilateral relations have grown stronger in recent years, and we value their relationship. Nevertheless, we continue to have different perspectives on important issues of concern.

One of these relates to Iran. As my colleagues are aware, the United States remains opposed to foreign investment in Iran's oil and gas sector, including Malaysian investment, as a matter of law and policy. Congress and the executive branch must continue to emphasize our concerns about such investment and related financial ties and to oppose business as usual with Iran. It is critical that the world community, including Malaysia, joins us in persuading Tehran to end its nuclear weapons program.

In addition, U.S. authorities have recently uncovered a number of plots to transship weapons technology and sensitive dual-use goods through Malaysia to Iran. This, together with past evidence of a Malaysian company's involvement in A.Q. Khan's clandestine nuclear proliferation network, point to an urgent need for Malaysia to implement reforms to its export controls. The failure to rein in proliferators not only endangers international security, but could also imperil legitimate trade. Thus, it would be in the country's best interest, as well as that of the international community, for Malaysia to enact a world-class export control system.

Another concern involves relations with the State of Israel. Although Malaysia is not a member of the League of Arab States, it appears to share much of the league's anti-Zionist ideology. Indeed, Kuala Lumpur does not maintain diplomatic relations with Israel.

A 2006 Congressional Research Service report on the then-proposed U.S.-Malaysia FTA pointed out that Kuala Lumpur appeared to be a de facto supporter of the trade embargo against Israel. In point of fact, Malaysia conducts virtually no trade with Israel.

The absence of normal commercial ties with Israel, let alone formal diplomatic relations, presents a stunningly awkward circumstance, one I hope Malaysian leaders would find time to reflect upon and to correct.

In conclusion, while I join this body in welcoming this 50th anniversary of Malaysian independence, I would simply note that U.S.-Malaysian relations could become even more constructive and mutually beneficial if Kuala Lumpur would take action to address these ongoing issues of concern.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Malaysia's 50th anniversary of their independence from the United Kingdom that was recently celebrated on August 31, 2007.

I am proud to serve as a Co-Chair of the Congressional Malaysia Trade, Security, and Economic Cooperation Caucus along with my good friend, the Honorable GREGORY W. MEEKS of New York. This is an important tribute from the House of Representatives to the people of Malaysia, as we honor a landmark day in their history. The United States was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with the newly independent Malaysia 50 years ago, and I am proud of how the United States/Malaysian relationship has prospered since their independence.

Malaysia has a population in excess of 25 million, and is a moderate-Muslim democratic nation in a key geo-politically sensitive region of the world. Malaysia is currently our 10th largest trading partner, and I hope that our trade relationship with Malaysia will expand. We have inked a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement with Malaysia, and our countries are currently in talks for a free trade agreement. I am hopeful that these talks will produce a free trade agreement accord that Congress will be able to pass. This enhanced economic partnership would be of great benefit to the businesses and citizens of both countries.

Malaysia has been a regional leader in many areas of mutual concern to the United States and Malaysia, they are a leader in counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics in Southeast Asia. Through intelligence sharing, close cooperation in law enforcement, participation in joint exercises and training, and other cooperative endeavors with its neighboring countries and the United States, Malaysia is a leader in many of our shared interests.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our recently departed Ambassador to Malaysia, Ambassador Christopher J. LaFleur, for his service of representing the interests of the United States in Kuala Lumpur. Moreover, I would like to thank the current Charge d'affaires ad interim for the American Embassy in Malaysia, David B. Shear, and the Malaysia Desk Officer at the State Department in Washington, Michael P. Taylor, for their service and hard work. Recently, I had the opportunity to meet our new Ambassador to Malaysia, Ambassador James R. Keith. Ambassador Keith has my full confidence and gratitude; he is a seasoned diplomat of great skill, and I wish him a good start to his duties in representing the United States in Malaysia.

I have also had the pleasure of working with many fine diplomats from Malaysia; I would like to recognize the current Ambassador from Malaysia to the United States, H.E. Datuk Dr. Rajmah Hussain. I would also like to note her immediate predecessor, who I worked with for several years, H.E. Tan Sri Ghazzali B. Sheikh Abdul Khalid. Ambassador Ghazzali was Malaysia's long-tenured representative in Washington, and I am pleased that he is currently engaged in the free trade talks between our two countries. I thank Ambassadors Rajmah and Ghazzali for their services in representing Malaysia in Washington.

I congratulate the people of Malaysia on the occasion of this landmark day in their history, and firmly believe that our bilateral relationship will only continue to grow and prosper.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 518, which recognizes the 50th anniversary of Malaysia's independence. H. Res. 518 acknowledges the Federation of Malaysia's accomplishments

over the past 50 years. In addition, H. Res. 518 recognizes the importance to the United States' strong bilateral relationship with Malaysia and endorses this relationship to continue to prosper. It is important for the United States to make this demonstration and endorsement not only because of our relationship with Malaysia but also because we share a similar history of gaining independence and implementing democracy. Therefore, we are proudly participating in the celebration of a government that has liberated its people and provides freedom in the name of democracy.

Mr. Speaker, celebrating Malaysia's 50th anniversary is significant because it shows her strength and perseverance towards maintaining freedom. Malaysia shows its determination throughout its history by gaining its independence in 1957, defeating communists soon after gaining independence, surviving through turmoil in 1960s, recession and political repression in the 1980s, and more unrest in the 1990s.

Today, Malaysia is a nation of skyscrapers and microchip plants, fast highways and sprawling cities where the government talks of Malaysia's role in biotech, or conference hosting or Islamic finance. It is almost unrecognizable from the independent Federation of Malaya of 31 August 1957, when its first Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al Haj stood tall in a specially built stadium in Kuala Lumpur and raised his right arm as the crowd echoed his three cries of "Merdeka!" which means freedom. At that time 60% of Malaysians were living below the national poverty line according to Dr. Richard Leete, head of the UN Development Program for Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei. Over the past 50 years that proportion has declined remarkably and currently there are less than 5% of people in poverty in Malaysia.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 518 also gives us the opportunity to support key American values and interests. By supporting this bill the United States will essentially be supporting a multi-religious and multiracial democracy. In addition, the United States will be supporting the condemnation of racism, religious hatred, and anti-Semitism. Also, the United States will be supporting Malaysia's condemnation of all forms of terrorism and assistance in the War on Terror. Finally, the United States will be supporting the success of our 10th largest trade partner, who we are currently in talks with about a free trade agreement.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Res. 518 and commending Malaysia on the 50th anniversary of its freedom.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 518, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING THE REMARKABLE EXAMPLE OF SIR NICHOLAS WINTON

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 583) recognizing the remarkable example of Sir Nicholas Winton who organized the rescue of 669 Jewish Czechoslovakian children from Nazi death camps prior to the outbreak of World War II.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 583

Whereas during the Holocaust, in which some 6,000,000 Jews were brutally put to death by the Government of Nazi Germany, a small number of individuals risked their lives and spent fortunes to save the lives of others because they were decent and courageous men and women of principle;

Whereas, in October 1938, the Nazi Government occupied the Sudetenland area of Czechoslovakia, which resulted in tens of thousands of Jewish refugees fleeing the occupied areas and seeking safety in the areas of as-yet unoccupied Czechoslovakia;

Whereas, in late 1938, a 29-year-old British businessman, Nicholas Winton, was encouraged by a friend at the British Embassy in Prague to forgo a ski vacation in the Alps to visit Prague and see first-hand the freezing refugee camps filled with Jewish families who had fled the Sudetenland;

Whereas, in the face of this enormous suffering, Winton, moved by feelings of deep compassion, undertook a massive effort to help the children of many of these Jewish families escape these horrible circumstances, though at that time neither he nor they knew the full extent of the horrors that awaited them;

Whereas Winton sought to find friendly governments which would grant asylum to these Jewish refugee children, and his efforts were rebuffed by the countries whose help he requested, until the Governments of Sweden and the United Kingdom agreed to accept children from the Czechoslovakian refugee camps;

Whereas Winton and other volunteers gathered names and other information on children whose parents recognized the importance of getting their children beyond the reach of the Nazi Government, and Winton was able to use this information to identify foster homes for these refugee children;

Whereas Winton took the lead in raising funds to pay for the transportation of the children from Prague to Britain and Sweden and to pay an enormous government-imposed fee to cover the costs of future repatriation;

Whereas, on March 14, 1939, the first 20 children left Prague under Winton's auspices, and the very next day the Nazi army overran the remainder of un-occupied Czechoslovakia;

Whereas the heroic effort of Winton and other volunteers to assist these young children flee occupied Czechoslovakia continued for over six months until the outbreak of World War II on September 1, 1939, during which time 669 children were able to leave in a total of eight separate groups;

Whereas the ninth group of some 250 children was scheduled to leave Prague on September 3, 1939, but was halted following the outbreak of hostilities, and none of these 250 children lived to see the end of World War II six years later;